

Prabuddha Bharata

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BY THE WAY

IN the bosom of the Timeless, nineteen centuries of the Christian era have now lost themselves. Who knows how many other eras have done the same! But the One Instinct—the craving for Perfection—endures, expressing itself, as time rolls on in more and more complex and manifold conditions and ways, always working to fulfil itself.

ALL activity is for the gain of happiness, at bottom this desire to be Timeless, the struggle for the restitution of Self-hood. Vedanta, declared by competent judges as not only the highest thought of the Indian—but that of the genius of man, therefore, not only embraces all religious activity, but *all activity*. Hence the wonderful GITA—the harmonious blending of action and inaction. Hence the wonderful workers of India, of the Janaka and Dharmavyadha type.

IF therefore, in these pages we should now and again introduce subjects hitherto left out, none need take it as a change of principle in the conduct of the paper: on the contrary it should be taken as a

sign of its growth and development, because Vedanta, for the service of which PRABUDDHA BHARATA was called into existence, cannot afford to shut out any activity from under its all-covering wings.

THIS is the age of congresses, conferences and meetings. They are the fruits of the season; for the law is that word precedes work. To question their usefulness is to betray one's lack of growth. But one should never forget that action,—not talk, individual examples,—not collective resolutions,—impregnate the masses with ideas which bear.

PRACTICAL Panjab takes the bull by the horns, while speech-making Bengal sits shaking the red rag at him. The Arya Samaj in Panjab is quietly leading perverts from Hinduism back into its fold, while the war is growing hot among the *élite* of Hindu Calcutta round the *theory* of the justifiability of social ostracism of Hindu travellers in foreign countries after they have gone through the necessary rites of expiation. What a commentary to the practicality of the

so-called leading people of India!

WE are very happy to inform our readers that we have got the Swami Vivekananda once again in our midst. This is the first visit of the Swamiji to the Advaita Ashrama, and though it has snowed here already, the climate, we are glad to say, agrees with him wonderfully. He has only quite recently returned to India, after an extended tour in the West, where his arduous labours have accomplished much good, and influenced many persons to investigate the truths of Vedanta. In America, hardly anywhere has he won for himself and his teachings a more unanimous or a more unstinted tribute of approbation than in California, where he passed the last winter. The proof that the principles involved in his instructions were thoroughly appreciated and comprehended, was clearly demonstrated by the starting of an Ashrama there, on a large tract of land, presented to the Swami for that purpose, and which is now under the able supervision of the Swami Turiyananda, whose efforts will no doubt develop it into a very useful training institution for students of Vedanta. During last spring, *en route* to Europe, Swami Vivekananda paid flying visits to Chicago and New York, delivering several lectures at the rooms of the Vedanta Society of the latter city.

AT the request of numerous friends he visited Paris, where he was afforded exceptional opportunities of obtaining an insight into the life of the French capital. In this fascinating city he fully maintained his reputation as the great

exponent of Hindu philosophy, and his originality, coupled with that simplicity and modesty all his own, made him a welcome guest in many an aristocratic salon. There he met and mixed with various nationalities, and found a kindred spirit in Père Hyacinth, that whilom Carmelite monk, who is now held in high repute as a popular liberal preacher. The Exposition with its varied and artistic exhibits pleased the fastidious eye of the Swami and nothing of interest escaped his keen glance.

FROM Paris, he visited Constantinople. A very important feature of his sojourn there, a sign of the times indeed—was, that even in the Turkish capital, the Swami delivered to interested audiences, two or three drawing-room lectures on the religion of the Vedanta.

FROM thence he passed on to Athens, whose ancient ruins serve as a picturesque setting to the gem-like beauty of the modern town. A hurried glimpse of Cairo, and sight of the old Nile, and then once more he sailed for his native land. Not for long however, will he linger here. Early in the summer, he proposes taking flight, this time for England, to return to his old field of work, which still awaits him there.

BY him have the three worlds been verily conquered who never swerves from Truth, who is ever kind to the poor and distressed, and who has brought lust and anger under perfect control.

—*Mahāvīrāna Tantra.*

It will be noted with pleasure by stu-

dents of Oriental religions that the Swami Abhedananda of India has resumed his course of Sunday afternoon lectures in Carnegie Lyceum. The subject for next Sunday will be "What is Salvation?" The entire course of lectures is free to the public and they are said to be particularly interesting to people of advanced religious thought who desire to penetrate below the surface to the underlying principles which are the foundation of all religions and which tend to the elevation of human life generally. They are given under the auspices of the Vedanta Society, whose library and class rooms are at No. 102 East Fifty-eighth street, and where visitors are cordially invited to call. It should be distinctly remembered that the purpose of the Society is not to proselytize or form a new "sect" or in any manner interfere with existing religious beliefs, but to add depth and purpose, through science and reason, to the best that already obtains. At the Tuesday evening lecture at No. 102 East Fifty-eighth street a charge of twenty-five cents is made to non-members. The subject this week is "Krishna and Christ."—*The New York Press*, Nov. 24th 1900.

WE have been given to understand that Mrs. Balakram, an English lady, the wife of the new Panjab civilian just returned from England, has embraced the Sikh religion and adopted the customs and habits of her husband's land. We sincerely trust that the news is true. The whole of educated India will anxiously watch the result of this experiment. Not that the same has

not been tried before, but these experiments are so rare and so important to the future of the Hindu race that we cannot pretend to be indifferent to any one of them. In the fusion of new blood into their veins lies the salvation of the Hindus. The pioneers in this line, therefore, who clear the path and bear the brunt of it, are entitled to the gratitude of all well-wishers of India.

THE Fourth Annual Report of the Hindu Religious Union, Trichinopoly, is before us. We are glad to observe the good work done by the Union through its Reading Room, Philosophical and Theological Library, Public Lectures, Sunday Classes and last but certainly not the least—the Girl's School. The course of instruction imparted to the girls is not only well-planned but seems to have produced excellent results. In this connexion we should like to draw the attention of the Hindu public in Madras to the case of Soobhanagam Ammal described in a letter to the BRAHMAVADIN for December last by the Swami Abhedananda and exhort it to help the Union liberally with funds to carry out its object of educating "Hindu girls on the lines of their own religion, custom and morality."

WE are pleased to note the building of "Vivekananda Town Hall" in Dharmapuri, Salem Dt., through the exertions of the local Zemindar, M. R. Ry. D. G. Muniswami Naidoo. We hope the founders of the Town Hall will see that work is done in the building which will satisfy the great teacher after whom it is called.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

ADVICE TO THE WORLDLY-MINDED... VIII

AS on the troubled surface of a lake the moon reflects in broken images, so on the unsettled mind of a worldly man engrossed in maya, the reflection of God is broken and partial.

SEEING the water pass glittering through a network of bamboo chips the small fry enter into it with great pleasure, and having once entered it they are caught therein and cannot get out. So also-foolish men enter into the world allured by its false glamour; and as it is easier to enter the net than to get out of it, it is easier to enter the world than to renounce it.

A kite was flying in the sky with a fish in its beaks. A number of other kites and crows pursued it making a tremendous row, annoying it dreadfully. It tried many ways to escape with its prey, now soaring up and then coming suddenly down, again darting swift in one direction, next plunging round making for the opposite, but all to no purpose. Its tormentors would not leave it alone. At last exhausted and disgusted, it dropped the fish down, which was instantly caught up by another kite, to its great relief, for its tormentors turned their attention to the talons of the second kite now and left it alone. Once free it alighted on a tree and perched to rest. An Avadhuta who was watching the birds seeing the kite at last sitting serene on a tree bowed to it and exclaim-

ed, "Oh what peace and happiness attend upon him who shakes off all attractions and burdens and becomes free! What danger otherwise!"

A tame mongoose has its home high up on the wall of a house. One end of a rope is tied to its neck, while the other end is fastened to a weight. The mongoose with the appendage runs and plays in the parlour or in the yard of the house, but no sooner does it get frightened than it runs up and hides itself in its home on the wall. But it cannot stay there long, as the weight on the other end of the rope draws it down and it is forced to leave its home. Similarly, a man has his home high up at the feet of the Almighty. Whenever he is frightened by adversity and misfortune, he goes up to his God, his true home; but in a short time he is obliged to come down into the world by its irresistible attractions.

THE heavier scale of a balance goes down while the lighter one rises up. Similarly he who is weighed down with too many cares and anxieties of the world goes down into it while he who has less cares rises up towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

Q. What is the world like?

A. It is like an Amrha fruit, all skin and stone with very little pulp, the eating of which produces colic.

KALI THE MOTHER

KALI THE MOTHER. By the Sister Nivedita (Miss Margaret E. Noble.)

Published by the well-known London publishing house of Messrs Swan Sonnenschein & Co., and dedicated to VIRESHWAR—Lord of Heroes,—would it have been possible in any other age?

Is it true that the West has drawn so near to the East, the self-complacent, exclusive, world-proselytising Christian spirit so much broadened, the proud white conqueror so far softened down, as to appreciate and admire, nay come and sit at the feet of the so-called 'heathen,' 'the degraded,' 'the black,' and learn the meaning of his idols, admire enraptured his social and religious ideals, and so far forget himself as to embrace his way of thinking, participate in his consciousness, and break the social barrier, till the throb of one life, the uprearing of one ideal, the sharing in one struggle, show that the division of East and West was like the division of space,—formal, forced, false? If not, how is this phenomenal work to be explained?

For 'KALI THE MOTHER' is not an amateurish, superficial, ill digested assortment of ideas glossed over by frothy sentiment such as the world receives now and then from Western neophytes of Hinduism. It is deep, sound, original, striking. It betrays a considerable assimilation of Hindu root-ideas by a mind of no mean order of receptivity, power and culture. Above all the author's sympathy with and the consequent insight into her subject is so real and profound that it is very hard to shake the conviction which grew in one as the 114

tiny pages were gone through, that at least one Western person has succeeded in breaking through the ice of race-feeling, prejudice &c., and taken a plunge deep enough to reach the *heart* of Hinduism. And if one, why not others?

A worse case, and therefore a better test, whereby to demonstrate the genuineness of the feeling above expressed, could not have been possible than that offered in 'KALI THE MOTHER'. Nothing absolutely in Hinduism is so obnoxious, repulsive and contrary to true religion and spirituality according to Western ideas as the conception, the image and the worship of Kali. A Western lady showing in the same, in a thoroughly rational and scientific manner, the interpretation and embodiment of the highest outreachings of the human head and heart, in language the charm of which is its harmonious blending of precision and poetry inspires us with the hope that the East *can* be and will be understood by the West.

To enable the reader to have some idea of the work we shall give a brief outline of the subjects treated with a few quotations. By a few rapid and masterly touches our author brings out the truth of the symbolism of thought in the first section. Mark the two pregnant sentences quoted therefrom:

'Our daily life creates our symbol of God'.

'Only by realising the full sense of every symbol can we know the whole thought of Humanity about God'.

Next comes the proposition

'The soul that worships becomes always a little child: the soul that becomes a child finds God oftenest as mother'.

'But it is in India that this thought of the mother has been realised in its completeness'.

But in Kali, the Mother is

'a terrible, and extraordinary figure! Those who call it horrible may well be forgiven. They pass only through the outer court of the temple. They are not arrived where the Mother's voice can reach them'.

She is indeed worshipped in many other forms, but Her Kali form

'comes closer to us than these. Others we admire; others we love; to Her we belong'.

The second section contains a description and explanation of the Kali symbol. The word picture is as beautiful as the interpretation is striking. After pointing out the Hindu conception of the dual nature of the world, our author goes on to observe:

'In this conception will be noted the deliberate statement that God and Nature are necessary to each other as the complementary manifestations of One, just as we find in the male and the female together, Humanity. That is to say, Nature itself is God, as truly as Nature's soul. "Are God and Nature then at strife?" cries, not only a great poet, but the whole heart of our western religion to-day. And far back from out of the dim centuries comes the hushed whisper of the Indian sages—"Look closer, brother! they are not even two, but one!" Under this aspect, the One Existence is known as Purush and Prakriti, Soul and Energy'

'Everywhere we see the phenomenon of one waiting to be touched by another, in order to manifest power and activity. The two are known in India as Siva and Sakti. As the knight waits for the sight of his own lady, powerless without the inspiration of her touch, as the disciple waits for the master, and finds in him at last the meaning of all his life before, so the soul lies inert, passive, unstirred by the external, till the great moment comes, and it looks up at the shock of some divine catastrophe, to know in a flash that the whole of the without,—the whole of life, and time, and nature, and experience—like the within, is also God.'

And this about Shiva:

'And He, what does He see? To Him, She is all beauty—this woman nude and terrible and black, who tells the name of God on the skulls of the dead, who creates the blood-sled on which demons fatten, who slays rejoicing and repents not, and blesses Him only that lies crushed beneath Her feet.'

Here is the whole idea in a nutshell:

The soul in realisation beholds the mother—how?

The picture of green lawns and smiling skies, and flowers steeped in sunshine, cannot deceive the All-Knower. Under the apparent loveliness, He sees life preying on life, the rivers breaking down the mountains, the comet poised in mid-space to strike. Around him rises up the wail of all the creatures, the moan of pain, and the sob of greed, and the pitiful cry of little things in fear. Irresponsible, without mercy, seems the spirit of time—deaf to the woes of man, or answering them only with a peal of laughter.

'Such is the world as the Hindu mind is predisposed to see it. "Verily," says the heart wearily, "Death is greater than Life, yea and better!"'

'Not so the supreme soul in its hour of vision! No coward's sigh of exhaustion, no selfish prayer for mercy, no idle resignation there! Bend low, and you shall hear the answer that India makes to the Eternal Motherhood, through all her ages of torture and despair. Listen well, for the voice is low that speaks, and the crash of ruin mighty:—

"Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee!" After all, has anyone of us found God in any other form than in this—the Vision of Siva? Have not the great intuitions of our life all come to us in moments when the cup was bitterest? Has it not always been with sobs of desolation that we have seen the Absolute triumphant in Love?"

The following observations by the way from the same section are characteristic:

'Of all the peoples of the earth, it might be claimed that Hindus are apparently the most, and at heart the least, idolatrous'.

'How strangely different is that of India! There, life has one test, one standard, and one alone. Does a man know God or not? That is all. No question of fruits, no question of activity, no question of happiness. Only—has the soul set out on the quest of realisation?'

The third section is devoted to the delineation of a few features of the lives and teachings of two saints of Kali, Sri Ramaprasada and Sri Ramakrishna. Our author's interpretation of facts of their lives, the light she throws upon and the interesting and instructive view-points from which she looks at them and the many priceless gems she finds in their mines, should be studied to be understood in their fulness and enjoyed.

We cannot resist quoting the following

exceedingly lucid and bright passage from the beginning of the section.

'Greatness is but another word for interpretation. We feel the very presence of some persons as if it were the translation of poems from a foreign tongue. Every profound truth waits for the life that shall be all its voice, and when that is found it comes within the reach of multitudes to whom it would have remained inaccessible.

'But we cannot find truth in a word, unless it is illumined by our own experience. That statement which we have lived but have not spoken, even to ourselves, when uttered by another's lips, we hail as revelation. And that alone. What we have ourselves once said seems commonplace, and that which is too far above we do not understand.

'So it happens that the interpreter, the poet, must be for ever telling to the world those things of which it has already won heart-knowledge. This is the sign that we demand always from the messenger—that he speak of a common memory. And to him who does this we listen gladly, believing that life will yet bring the significance of those words of his that do not, for the nonce, explain themselves to us'.

'It is when the idea has been elaborated in this way by the imagination and conscience of the myriads, that there arises a man who seems to embody it in his own person. And he is hailed as Master and Teacher by all, because he interprets their own lives, and speaks the words that already they were struggling to express. He is the crest of the wave, but all these are the wave itself'.

In the fourth, fifth and sixth sections can be found a simple statement of the philosophy of the Kali worshipper,—his attitude towards life and death, the mould of his conduct. Among other things Kali says to him :

'Ask not of plans. Needs the arrow any plan when it is loosed from the bow? Such art thou. When the life is lived, the plan will stand revealed. Till then, O child of time, know nothing'!

The seventh section—'The Story of Kali for a Western Baby', is very sweetly told. Grown up people might with advantage take many hints from it.

Swami Vivekananda's arousing and luminous poem 'Kali the Mother' published in PRABUDDHA BHARATA for April 1899, forms the last section.

We beg to offer our sincere congratulations to the Sister Nivedita on this her service, not to India alone—and to England, though theirs is the greatest benefit—but to the whole of the civilised world, inasmuch as she has given it a new and unique point of view of looking at life,—a point of view which alone is capable of solving the conflict of Science and Religion and ending the strife between Nature and God.

A CHAPTER OF SOCIAL REFORM

I

AT the large girl school of—, no three little girls were so unlike each other as Silāvati, Mamāṭā and Tārā. Their contrast was so much noticed probably because they were playmates at home, being neighbours, and because they were classfellows too. All three were good-looking, each in her own way, but Tārā was the most beautiful, not only among them, but in the whole school.

There was something weird in her eyes which people thought added so much to her natural beauty. But in spite of her truthfulness, kind-heartedness and a certain nobility of nature she was a little imp. No one ever saw such a sensitive, impulsive, quick, passionate and self-willed girl—so the neighbours remarked. And they had to make this remark pretty often; for there was hardly a day

in which Tārā's eyes did not flash mischief, anger or vengeance upon somebody, something or other. Of course all the good women of the neighbourhood could not contemplate her future without horror, if she grew with her growth all those undesirable qualities which she possessed; more so, because her widowed mother was extremely poor and she had only a very slightly educated brother who could not earn enough to support his mother, sister, and wife who fortunately had not as yet come to live in the family.

Silāvati was all that a good little girl should be. Of course she was naughty at times, but that only served to set her goodness off. She was the best student in her class and invariably carried off the first prize, was idolized by her rich parents, brothers and sisters, and neighbours pointed her out as 'the Lakshmi' of the place—exactly the opposite of Tārā'.

Mamata on the other hand was a dull, but plodding, ambitious little thing. She had neither the brains and goodness of heart of Silāvati, nor the fire and nobility of Tārā, but she contrived to have her own way in things by policy verging often to meanness. She and Tara were always at daggers drawn and no little heart probably envied Tārā's beauty and hated her, as did Mamatā's. Her parents were in easy circumstances and she had two very good brothers and a younger sister.

Silāvati and Mamatā were married the same night, very desirably. Mamatā's husband was better off than Silāvati's, but he was only a book-keeper drawing Rs 150 a month, while Silāvati's husband was a Master of Arts in English and Sanskrit, and he was just appointed a professor in the city college, on a salary

of Rs 80 a month.

Though their senior by several months, Tārā was not married that year, because her mother had no money. Some desirable matches were proposed for her and many parents came to see if she would do as a wife for their sons, but all went away pleased with her beauty but disappointed at the extreme poverty of her people.

Tārā used to see her old friends Mamatā and Silāvati, not perhaps as often as before, and heard the accounts of their joyful experiences at their husband's homes, with rather a heavy heart. For people had already—though she was only a few months above thirteen—begun to say that nobody would care to marry her as her brother was so poor, and specially as she was so very violent. Who would take an *Alakshmi* as the goddess of his home even if she were beautiful? And Mamatā did not allow Tārā to forget that even if she were married sometime she could never hope to get such a good and loving mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, so many valuable and beautiful ornaments, clothes and presents as she had, &c. Tārā of course retaliated on Mamatā as best as she could, cried at times, and made her mother's heart ache by repeating to her all that people said, but generally strived to keep up her old masterful ways though the consciousness was vaguely manifesting itself to her that perhaps it would happen to her as people said.

Soon after the marriage of Silāvati and Mamata, her mother stopped sending Tārā to school, and made her work at home with but slight success, on a spinning-wheel. Fortunately for her

poor mother, Tārā ceased to go out much to the homes of the neighbours when they began to say things about her marriage, and of her own accord devoted part of the day in reading aloud to her mother from an old copy of Mahabharata, translated into the local vernacular, which belonged to the family. There was hardly any other book in the house, so she had no choice. Her own school books she burnt to ashes and trampled on them afterwards in a fit of rage the day her mother stopped her going to school.

The next year a husband was found for Tārā. He was above forty, a widower, the head of the office her brother worked in. He belonged to the same subdivision of caste, as did Tārā's family. He had some small children, and as he was a drunkard, in debt, and diseased, he could not get any body-else to marry his daughter or sister to him. It was easy to prevail upon Tārā's brother and mother and the thing was perpetrated.

Tārā was taken to her husband's home after the marriage-night, and returned to her mother after a few days as usual. What she had heard of her husband and what she had seen of him during the days she was at his home was enough to break her heart.

Within a month of her marriage her whole character underwent a complete transformation. Tārā was no more that lively, bold and thoughtless girl: every day found her more moody, more reserved and more retiring than before. Even her mother did not know the thoughts that were wringing her heart. Presently she was taken seriously ill and for a time her life was despaired of. Her husband

paid her a visit during her illness, but he had drunk so much that it was with the greatest difficulty that Tārā's brother could stop him kicking up a row and abusing himself and his mother for letting his new wife get fever.

Hardly had Tārā recovered when the news came one morning that excessive drinking in the previous evening had cost her husband his life.

It is difficult to say if this news hastened her recovery, but Tārā did get well very rapidly after this. The spinning-wheel and she became fast friends now, and the Mahabharata and a little house work—took up all the rest of her time. After the mourning was over, her mother sent for the family Guru, a very aged Brahman of the old school, and a devotee of Rama, genuine and true, and had Tārā initiated.

The girl Tārā was dead—for the Tārā after her husband's death and her initiation was no longer her former self. In a year or so the fire of devotion to Rama had completely purged her of all animal nature—of food even she had very little want—and all the former wildness in her nature was transformed into a spiritual poise and calmness which made her brother's home a shrine of peace and happiness in the midst of poverty. It should be remarked that her youth and beauty were not without their effect upon the ordinary-worldly men who live in and for their senses, and not a few temptations and dangers were shewn on her way, but all these she conquered easily, supported by the strength, whose name is Infinity.

Things went much the best with Silā-vati and Mamatā in the eyes of the

world. Silā's husband, who soon became devoted to her, educated her most carefully in English, and as he belonged to a heterodox Hindu sect whose members imitated European ways of life and manners, she soon became a fashionable lady and a 'society' woman. She was blessed with a son in her seventeenth year.

Mamātā on the other hand had in her mother-in-law the finest example of the orthodox Hindu lady of the old school. And in that mould she cast herself. But her married life though happy otherwise was darkened over by the death of all her children within a few days of their birth. But she learned to love the children of her brothers-in-law as her own, and comparing her lot to Tārā's soon became reconciled to it.

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We look back on our little girls, now grown-up women of thirty. Silā had blossomed into an accomplished and fashionable lady, a charming hostess and the pride of her husband. Her only son—Rama, for she had no other issue—had already given proofs of becoming a greater genius than his father, and life and fortune smiled upon her.

Mamātā's children, of whom she had many, did not any one of them survive. But she placed her whole mother-affection upon the little daughter of a brother-in-law and divided her time and attention between the worship of the family-god and household duties, for she was mistress now in the family—her good mother-in-law having died some time ago.

Tārā's life, since her widowhood had been to her an eager, earnest and joy-

ous climb to the heights of spirituality, beset more or less with easily conquered difficulties. Indeed her progress in spiritual realization was so great and wonderful that it was not rare with her to stay in *Samādhi* for days together. In fact, once this event, rather uncommon now-a-days, found its way in the newspapers when Tārā chanced to go into *Samādhi* in the temple of the Deyi close to her house. But a fresh trouble that had been brewing sometime was making itself manifest. Her Guru, the spiritual father to whom she owed not a little of her rapid success, had a nephew, a little older than herself, who had conceived a fierce passion for her, when he saw her first while on a visit to her brother's home after the death of his uncle a year ago. His visits had become quite frequent afterwards, but he racked his brain in vain for a year to find out a means of getting Tārā in his power. He devised one at last. He came one morning to Tārā's mother and brother with the news that he was shortly going to found a temple of Siva in memory of his late uncle—their Guru,—and that all his disciples were coming to join the ceremony; all of them too, must come. The call was imperative but unfortunately Tārā's brother could not get leave from his office to go. So he stayed at home with his wife and baby; and his other children, mother and sister, went to the Guru's house—a distance of about ten miles.

When he found Tārā at his home, deprived of her brother's immediate protection, the Guru's nephew, amidst all the bustle and work of the ceremony, found various means of making over-

tures to her, which she coolly ignored. The fiend, thus disappointed, contemplated violence, and on the night preceding the day of their return home, found an opportunity of attacking Tārā with impunity. The lioness without any ado, shook herself free from his grasp and suddenly catching him by the neck threw him down on the ground with such force that the fall broke his arm.

The man, when he realized the situation yelled for help, and said that he had broken his arm by a fall when rushing after a Mussulman-like man whom he found in the dark with a guest of theirs, whose identity he would reveal afterwards. When Tārā had left for home with her mother, nephews and nieces, the next day, the Guru's nephew gave out that it was Tārā whom he saw in the dark with the Mussulman-like man, and the news of course spread like wildfire through the whole city. Tārā on the other hand, on reaching home told her brother all that happened during the time she was away and said she did not tell anything to their mother to spare her the shock. Her brother expressed

great surprise and anger and vowed in his own mind to teach a lesson to the scoundrel, for Tara was not only a sister but the guardian angel of peace to him and his.

The reaction on the public mind however was too great. For the last ten years Tārā had occupied in the popular fancy the place of Tārā the Devi, the Mother. On the other hand, how could they disbelieve the story of her own Guru's nephew about her conduct, of which he was an eyewitness? Forthwith came all the Shastric and traditional assertions about the mysteriousness and frailty of woman's nature, stories of other deceitful women,—corroborations and what not, till the popular opprobrium on Tārā's brother for allowing her to live in his house became so great, that Tārā decided to leave the place one night. She left a few lines behind for her brother, to say that she was going on a distant pilgrimage to save him the popular obloquy and that he must not trouble about her as she was more than capable of taking care of herself.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

ARYANS AND TAMILIANS

A veritable ethnological museum. Possibly the half-ape-skeleton of the recently found Sumatra link will be found on search here too. The Dolmens are not wanting. Flint implements can be dug out almost anywhere. The lake-dwellers—at least the river-dwellers—must have been abundant at one time. The cave-men and lea-wearers still persist. The primitive hunters living in forests are *en evidence* in various

parts of the country. Then there are the more historical varieties—the Negrito-kolarian, the Dravidian and the Aryan. To these have been added from time to time dashes of nearly all the known races, and a great many yet unknown; various breeds of Mongoloids, Mongols, Tartars, and the so-called Aryans of the philologists. Well, here are the Persian, the Greek, the Uchee, the Hun, the Chin, the Scythian and many more,

melted and fused: the Jews, Parsis, Arabs, Mongols, down to the descendants of the Vikings and the lords of the German forests, yet undigested;—an ocean of humanity, composed of these race-waves seething, boiling, struggling, constantly changing form, rising to the surface, spreading and swallowing little ones, subsiding—this is the history of India.

In the midst of this madness of nature, one of the contending factions discovered a method, and through the force of its superior culture, succeeded in bringing the largest number of Indian humanity under its sway.

The superior race styled themselves the Aryas or Nobles, and their method was the *Varnāshramāchāra*—the so-called caste.

Of course the men of the Aryan race reserved for themselves, consciously or unconsciously, a good many privileges; yet the institution of caste has always been very flexible, sometimes too flexible to ensure a healthy uprise of races very low in the scale of culture.

It put theoretically at least the whole of India under the guidance—not of wealth, nor of the sword—but of intellect,—intellect chastened and controlled by spirituality. The leading caste in India is the highest of the Aryans—the Brahmans.

Though apparently different from the social methods of other nations, on close inspection the Aryan method of caste will not be found so very different except on two points.

First, in every other country the highest honour belongs to the Kshatriya—the man of the sword. The Pope of Rome will be glad to trace his descent to some robber baron on the banks of the Rhine. In India the highest honour belongs to the man of peace—the Shraman, the Brahman, the man of God.

The greatest Indian king would be gratified

to trace his descent to some ancient sage who lived in the forest, probably a recluse, possessing nothing, dependent upon the villagers for his daily necessities, and all his life trying to solve the problems of this life and the life after.

Second, the difference of *unit*. The law of caste in every other country takes the individual man or woman as the sufficient unit. Wealth, power, intellect or beauty suffices for the individual to leave the status of birth and scramble up to anywhere one can.

Here the unit is all the members of a caste-community.

Here too, one has every chance of rising from a low caste to a higher or the highest: only, in this birth-land of Altruism, one is compelled to take his whole caste along with him.

You cannot here, on account of your wealth, power, or any other merit, leave your fellows behind and make common cause with your superiors—deprive those who helped in your acquiring the excellence of any benefit therefrom and give them in return only contempt. If you want to rise to a higher caste in India, you have to elevate all your caste first, and then there is nothing in your onward path to hold you back.

This is the Indian method of fusion, and this has been going on from time immemorial. For in India, more than elsewhere, such words as Aryans and Dravidians, are only of philological import, the so-called cranio-logical differentiation finding no solid ground to work upon.

Even so are the names Brahman, Kshatriya &c. They simply represent the status of a community in itself continuously fluctuating, even when it has reached the summit and all further endeavours are towards fixity of the type by non-marriage, by being forced to admit fresh groups from lower castes, or foreign lands, within its pale.

Whatever caste has the power of sword, becomes Kshatriya; whatever learning, Brahman; whatever wealth, Vaishya.

The groups that have already reached the coveted goal, indeed, try to keep themselves aloof from the new comers, by making subdivisions in the same caste, but the fact remains that they coalesce in the long run.

This is going on before our own eyes all over India.

Naturally a group having raised itself would try to preserve the privileges to itself. Hence, whenever it was possible to get the help of a king, the higher castes, especially the Brahmans, have tried to put down similar aspirations in lower castes, by the sword, if practicable. But the question is, did they succeed? Look closely into your Puranas and Upa-puranas, look especially into the local Khandas of the big Puranas, look round and see what is happening before your eyes and you will find the answer.

We are, in spite of our various castes, and in spite of the modern custom of marriage restricted within the sub-divisions of a caste (though not universal), a mixed race in every sense of the word.

Whatever may be the import of the philological terms "Aryan" and "Tamilian", even taking for granted that both these grand subdivisions of Indian humanity came from outside the Western frontier, the dividing line had been from the most ancient times one of language and not of blood. Not one of the epithets expressive of contempt for the ugly physical features of the Dasyus of the Vedas would apply to the great Tamilian race: in fact if there be a toss for good looks between the Aryans and the Tamilians, no sensible man would dare prognosticate the result.

The super-arrogated excellence of birth of any caste in India is only pure myth, and in no part of India has it, we are sorry to say,

found such congenial soil owing to linguistic differences, as the South.

We purposely refrain from going into the details of this social tyranny in the South, just as we have stopped ourselves from scrutinizing the genesis of the various modern Brahmans and other castes. Sufficient for us to note the extreme tension of feeling, that is evident between the Brahmans and non-Brahmans of the Madras Presidency.

We believe in Indian caste as one of the greatest social institutions that the Lord gave to man. We also believe that though the unavoidable defects, foreign persecutions and above all the monumental ignorance and pride of many Brahmans who do not deserve the name, have thwarted, in many ways, the legitimate fructification of this most glorious Indian institution, it has already worked wonders for the land of Bharata and is destined to lead Indian humanity to its goal.

We earnestly entreat the Brahmans of the South not to forget the ideal of India—the production of a Universe of Brahmans, pure as purity, good as God Himself: this was at the beginning, says the Mahabharata, and so will it be in the end.

Any one who claims to be a Brahman then, should prove his pretensions, first by manifesting that spirituality, and next by raising others to the same status.

On the face of this it seems that most of them are only nursing a false pride of birth; and any schemer, native or foreign, who can pander to this vanity and inherent laziness, by fulsome sophistry appears to satisfy most.

Beware Brahmans, this is the sign of death! Arise and show your manhood, your Brahmanhood, by raising the non-Brahmans around you—not in the spirit of a master,—not with the rotten canker of egotism crawling with superstitions and charlatany of East and West—but in the spirit of a servant.

For verily he who knows how to serve

knows how to rule.

The non-Brahmans also have been spending their energy in kindling the fire of caste hatred—vain and useless to solve the problem—to which every non-Hindu is only too glad to throw in a load of fuel.

Not a step forward can be made by these inter-caste quarrels, not one difficulty removed; only the beneficent onward march of events would be thrown back, possibly for centuries, if the fire bursts out into flame.

It would be a repetition of Buddhistic political blunders.

In the midst of this ignorant clamour and hatred, we are delighted to find Pandit D. Savariroyan pursuing the only legitimate and the only sensible course.

Instead of wasting precious vitality in foolish and meaningless quarrels, Pandit Savariroyan has undertaken in his articles on the "Admixture of the Aryan with 'Tamilian" in the *Siddhanta Deepika*, to clear not only a lot of haze created by a too adventurous Western philology, but pave the way to a better understanding of the caste problem in the South.

Nobody got any thing by begging. We get only what we deserve. The first step to deserve is to desire; and we desire with success what we feel ourselves worthy to get.

A gentle yet clear brushing off of the cobwebs of the so-called Aryan theory and all its vicious corollaries is therefore absolutely necessary, especially for the South, and a proper self-respect created by a knowledge of the past grandeur of one of the great ancestors of the Arya race—the great *Tamilians*.

We stick in spite of Western theories to that definition of the word "Arya", which we find in our sacred books, and which includes only the multitude, we now call Hindus.

■ This Arya race, itself a mixture of two great races, Sanskrit-speaking and Tamil-

speaking, applies to all Hindus alike. That the Sudras have been in some Smritis excluded from this epithet means nothing, for the Sudras were and still are only the waiting Aryas,—Aryas in novitiate.

Though we know Pandit Savariroyan is walking over rather insecure ground, though we differ from many of his sweeping explanations of Vedic names and races, yet we are glad that he has undertaken the task of beginning a proper investigation into the culture of the great mother of Indian civilization—if the Sanskrit-speaking race was the father.

We are glad also that he boldly pushes forward the Accado-Sumerian racial identity of the ancient *Tamilians*. And this makes us proud of the blood of the great civilization which flowered before all others,—compared to whose antiquity the Aryans and Semites are babies.

We would suggest also that the land of Punt of the Egyptians was not only Malabar, but that the Egyptians as a race boldly migrated from Malabar across the ocean and entered the delta along the course of the Nile from north to south, to which Punt they have been always fondly looking back as the home of the blessed.

This is a move in the right direction. Detailed and more careful work is sure to follow with a better study of the *Tamilian* tongues and the *Tamilian* elements found in the Sanskrit literature, philosophy and religion. And who are more competent to do this work than those who learn the *Tamilian* idioms as their mother tongue?

As for us Vedantists and Sannyasis, we are proud of our Sanskrit-speaking ancestors of the Vedas; proud of our Tamil-speaking ancestors whose civilization is the oldest yet known; we are proud of our Kolarian ancestors older than either of the above—who lived and hunted in forests; we are proud of

our ancestors with flint implements—the first of the human race; and if evolution is true, we are proud of our animal ancestors, for they antedated man himself. We are proud that we are descended of the whole universe, sentient or insentient. Proud that

we are born, and work and suffer,—prouder still that we die when the task is finished and enter forever the realm where no more there is delusion.

VIVEKANANDA

LEAVES FROM THE GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(According to M., a son of the Lord and servant)

(Continued from page 188, Vol. V.)

SRI Ramakrishna (to Syam Basu):—Furthermore, why don't you execute a power of attorney in favour of the Lord? Let all your cares and responsibilities rest on him. A person of high character is entrusted by you with certain duties. Surely, such a person is not capable of doing you wrong. The question whether a sinner will be punished hereafter or not may well be left to *Him*.

Doctor:—It is He alone who knows what He is going to do. Human calculation cannot go far enough. The Lord is above and beyond all human calculation.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Syam Basu):—How very fashionable this sort of talk has grown amongst you Calcutta people! They speak of the absence of the principle of equality in God's dealings with man! Why should God, they complain, make some people happy and others unhappy! These fools only see God's nature to be the same as their own.

IS FAME OR POPULARITY THE END OF
LIFE?

Hemused to come to the temple of

Kali at Dakhineswar in company with his friends, the Janbazar Baboos. Whenever he had occasion to meet me he used to say, 'Well, Mr. Bhattacharya, there is only one thing worth having in this world, viz., honour. Is it not so?'

Very few see that the end of human life is to see God!

SUKSHMA OR SUBTLE OR FINE BODY

Syam Basu:—Sir, we hear a good deal of a sukshma sharira, a fine body, as distinguished from the gross body. The question is, can any one undertake to show us such a body? Can any person show that my double (the fine body) does actually leave the gross body with a view to go elsewhere?

Sri Ramakrishna:—A true devotee would not care to show you all this. He cares not the least whether some fool will regard him with respect or not. The having some big people about him is the last thing that he wishes for.

Syam Basu Well, sir how do you know the subtle body from the gross body?

THE GROSS BODY; THE SUBTLE BODY,
THE BODY OF ECSTASY AND THE GREAT

CAUSE OR THE UNCONDITIONED.

Sri Ramakrishna :— The five elements make up the gross body. The subtle body is made up of *manas* (the ruler of the senses) the *buddhi* (the determinative faculty), *ahamkar* (the ego or personality) and the *chitta* (the feeling). The inner body which feels the joy of the Lord is called the 'body of ecstasy' or the *kāraṇa śarīra*. The *Tantras* call it *Bhagavatī-tanu* or the body derived from the Mother of the universe. Beyond all these is the *Mahākāraṇa*, the Great First Cause—the Unconditioned—which cannot be expressed by words.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICE.

Sri Ramakrishna :—What is the use of merely listening to lectures? The great thing is practice (*sādhana*).

You repeat the words *siddhi, siddhi* (a mild intoxicating drug). Will that make you drunk? You may pound the drug to a pulp, smear your body with it. Will that make you drunk? No. You must swallow a little of it. There are threads of various numbers, No. 40, No. 41, and so on. Well, you do not know one number from another unless you are in the trade. It is by no means hard for those *in* the trade to know a thread of a particular number from that of another number. That being so, I say, do practise a little. That done, it would be easy for you to have correct ideas as to the gross body, the subtle body, the *kāraṇa* (the body made of joy) the *Mahākāraṇa* (the Great Cause or the Unconditioned.)

DEVOTION TO GOD, THE ONE THING
NEEDFUL; HOW TO PRAY.

When you pray, ask for *Bhakti*, devotion to His lotus feet. After Ahalyā was made free from the curse of her husband, Rama Chandra said, 'Do ask for a boon from me.' Ahalyā said,

'Oh Rama! If Thou wilt give me a boon, do grant that my mind may ever be on Thy feet beautiful like the lotus. Oh, I may be born amongst swine, but that does not matter!'

For my part I pray for *Bhakti* alone to my Divine Mother.

Putting flowers upon Her lotus feet, with folded hands I prayed, 'Oh Mother! here is ignorance, here is knowledge, Oh! take them both; I want them not. Grant that I may have pure *Bhakti* alone. Here is cleanliness (of the mind and the body), here is uncleanness; what shall I do with them? Let me have pure *Bhakti*. Oh! here is sin, here is virtue; I want neither the one nor the other. Let me have pure *Bhakti* alone. Here is good, here is evil; Oh! take them all, I want none. Let me have pure *Bhakti* alone. Here are good works, here are bad; Oh! place me above them; I want them not. Grant that I may have pure *Bhakti* alone.'

Dharma means good works like charity. If you take the fruit of good works, you must take the fruit of bad works too. If you take the fruit of virtue you must take the fruit of sin also. Knowledge of One (*Jñāna*) implies a knowledge of the many (*Ajñāna*). Taking cleanliness (*Suchi*) you can not get rid of its opposite, uncleanness. Thus a knowledge of light implies a knowledge of darkness, its opposite. A knowledge of unity implies a knowledge of diversity.

Blessed is that man who loves God! What matters it if he eats the flesh of swine? On the other hand, let a man live upon *Havisya*; if he is attached to the world and does not love God then he is wretched.

(To be continued)

*Rice cooked with clarified butter etc., and offered to the Deity